

Applicant: Braud et al.
Application No.: 09/555,555

REMARKS

Claims 32-34, 36, 37, 46, 47, and 49-65 are currently pending in this application. Pursuant to the May 23, 2006 Office Action, claim 54 was withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention, and claims 32-34, 36, 37, 46, 51-53, 55-58 and 63-65 were stated to be allowed. Claims 50 and 59-62 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Office Action states that the amended portion in section (iv) of claim 50 which states, "identifying any test compound that affects the binding of HLA-E to the cells," lacks adequate support in the specification.

By way of this Reply, claim 32 has been amended to delete NKG2D from the recited group of NKG2 members, claim 50 has been amended, without prejudice, and is believed to overcome the written description rejection, and claim 60 has been amended, without prejudice, to correct a minor grammatical error. Applicants submit that no new matter has been submitted by way of this Reply.

October 19, 2006 Telephonic Interview

Because the Office Action did not address the status of claim 47 and 49, the undersigned contacted the Examiner on October 19, 2006 to discuss this matter. The Examiner agreed that claims 47 and 49 should have been indicated as being allowed, and issued an interview summary stating the same.

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January 3, 2007 Telephonic Interview

The Examiner is thanked for granting a telephonic interview with the Applicants' undersigned representative on January 3, 2007. During the interview the written description rejection of claim 50 was discussed. Applicants proposed to amend paragraph (iv) of claim 50 as follows, "~~identifying any test compound that affects the binding of HLA-E to the cells~~ determining whether the presence of the selected compound affects the binding of HLA-E to the cells." Support for this amendment can be found at page 6, lines 24-25 of the specification. The Examiner agreed that this amendment should overcome the current written description rejection.

During the January 3, 2007 interview, the Examiner also recommended amending claim 50 to be more specific. In particular, the Examiner noted that the preamble and paragraph (v) of claim 50 should be more specific, and suggested amending this claim to incorporate functional language in order to avoid further rejection.

In accordance with the Examiner's remarks, claim 50 has been amended, without prejudice, as discussed above to overcome the written description rejection and to recite more specific language in the preamble and paragraph (v).

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 50, as amended, should be in condition for allowance. Claims 59-62, which depend from claim 50, should also be in condition for allowance for the same reasons.

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Conclusion

For the above reasons provided above, it is respectfully submitted that pending claims 32-34, 36, 37, 46, 47, and 49-65, are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner does not believe that the claims are in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at 215-568-6400.

Respectfully submitted,

Braud et al.

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